



Strategy for IUCN's Programme and Policy on Antarctic Issues

(As approved by the 72nd Meeting of Council on 2-4 February 2009)



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Introduction

Antarctica is a frozen desert that receives little precipitation, most of which falls as snow. However this austere appearance belies this area's importance as an ecosystem and its role in maintaining global ecosystem services. Antarctica and the Southern Ocean represent 20 per cent of the planet's surface. The Antarctic Strategy is developed in the framework of the Director General's Organisational Development and Change process and the IUCN Programme 2009-2012. It defines the potential areas for intervention that make use of IUCN's niche and value proposition and suggests how component programmes² will organise and coordinate their efforts to optimise the Union's impact in the region and ensure that such efforts contribute to the delivery of the IUCN Programme 2009-2012.

The activities envisaged in Antarctica are intended to:

- assure significant contribution to the IUCN Programme 2009-2012.

I – Why should IUCN engage in Antarctica?

approved organisations with conservation mandates which are permitted to attend ATS meetings.

Other relevant environmental governance instruments for the Antarctic include, but are not limited to:

- The Convention on Migratory Species' Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP).
- The International Whaling Commission's establishment of the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary.
- The International Maritime Organisation, (including the International Convention on the Protection of Pollution from Ships, 1973 and Protocol 1978 (Marpol)), whose regulations apply to many activities in the Antarctic, which have established the Southern Ocean as a specially sensitive area.
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SCAR has expressed an interest in revising and updating the Antarctic Conservation Strategy (1991), and has made initial contact with IUCN to gauge IUCN's interest in pursuing this as a joint effort. In 2004, the IUCN DG tasked the Chair of IUCN's Antarctic Advisory Committee

II.3 IUCN Secretariat

The IUCN Secretariat, mainly through the Global Marine Programme, the Protected Areas Programme and the World Commission on Protected Areas and the Species Survival Commission's Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG), maintains some activity with respect to Antarctica. In particular, papers and statements have been submitted, each year, and an IUCN representative has been present in most years for at least partial participation at the annual meetings of the CCAMLR Commission and in the ATCM. At the 2008 CCAMLR meeting IUCN's representative actively participated for the whole two weeks, while at the 2008 ATCM two representatives shared the two-week meeting.

IUCN has also raised Antarctic issues and used Antarctic examples in other fora (for example to promote the establishment within an Antarctic context of marine protected areas within the Antarctic Treaty Area and also on the high seas outside of the Southern Ocean). As noted later in this paper, funding for Antarctica work has been difficult to obtain and this has largely been an unfunded mandate for the Secretariat and Commissions.

II.4 IUCN Partners

- Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) – with increasing climate change and human presence, invasive species become an important issue for this fragile ecosystem.
- Conservation Commons – as research is a critical focus of human endeavour in Antarctica, the principles and practice of the Commons with respect to information management needs to be applied.
- ASOC is jointly fundraising with IUCN for collaborative work on Antarctica, particularly for preparation for and input into Antarctic Treaty and other relevant meetings and other Antarctic conservation activity.

SCAR, The Scientific Committee on Antarctic research (SCAR) has in the past worked closely with IUCN (e.g. joint workshops and publication on Sub-Antarctic Island Conservation (1992), Antarctic education (1993), and development of the Antarctic Conservation Strategy (1991). SCAR has expressed an interest in revising and updating the Antarctic Conservation Strategy (see above).

II.5 Other stakeholders

- Private sector - Although human activities in Antarctica are mainly focused on scientific research, the private sector is having a growing influence. Both fishing and tourism are cited as important threats to Antarctic ecosystems

2. IUCN convenes and builds partnerships for action
3. IUCN has a global-to-local and local-to-global reach
4. IUCN influences standards and practices

The four features of IUCN's value proposition make IUCN distinct from others in the conservation and sustainable development arena. They enable the Union to demonstrate leadership and ensure it has strategic influence at many levels.

Within the framework of this value proposition, IUCN's actions in Antarctica will support a more effective response to emerging conservation and natural resource management issues by:

- Improving its ability to produc

Thematic Programme Area 5: Greening the world economy

Global result 5.2: Companies, industry associations and consumer groups incorporate ecosystem values into planning and action.

- **Tourism**
Tourism is one of the issues dividing the ATS Party countries, some being inclined to see the tourism industry as a legitimate 'peaceful use' and a way to build a constituency in support of protection of the Antarctic environment, others being of the view that rapidly increasing tourism brings harm to the Antarctic environment. IUCN's increasing activities and past experience with the tourism industry will be applied to inform and facilitate the ATS discussions and help build a consensus on the issue.

IV.2 Strengthening the Antarctic Advisory Committee

The IUCN Antarctic Advisory Committee will be reactivated and strengthened in line with CGR4.034. The Council will be asked to appoint a new Committee, representative of interested Members and Commissions. This will ensure a diverse range of professional backgrounds to assist IUCN's work.

The Antarctic Advisory Committee is an essential part of IUCN's Antarctic activity and will be part of the overall integrated Antarctic work.

To assist the Antarctic Advisory Committee, dedicated staff will be appointed, including the Network Coordinator (see below) designated to manage the interaction between the Antarctic Advisory Committee and network members.

One priority for the Antarctic Advisory Committee will be advice on the development of a new Antarctic Conservation Strategy. The Committee will be strengthened as part of the Strategy and in relation to the broader IUCN network model.

IV.3 Adopting a network approach

To further strengthen its presence in Antarctica, IUCN will apply the network approach developed in the framework of the Director General's Organisational Development and Change process and the IUCN Programme 2009-2012. The network approach builds on the valuable experience gained from Commissions and Members and has been used successfully by IUCN's Global Thematic Programmes, for example the Water and Nature Initiative (WANI), the Livelihoods and Landscapes Strategy (LLS) and the Energy and Ecosystems Initiative.

In 2009, a formal Antarctica network will be created to support IUCN's presence and activities in the Antarctic region. Funding will be sought to establish and resource this Network. This network will have a mandate for the intersessional period and its continuation beyond 2012 will depend on the nature of the 2013-2016 Programme.

any Antarctica activity and current applications for funding for partnership work with